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ABSTRACT

From the time a new faculty member is hired until a final decision is made on promotion and tenure, his/her record will undergo constant scrutiny by departmental personnel committees, school and/or university-wide committees, external reviewers, and administrators. A formal and clear-cut mentoring system can benefit new faculty members: senior faculty members assigned as mentors would feel that they have the support, responsibility, and obligation to play a proactive role in establishing an ongoing relationship with the mentee; an explicit mentoring process may reduce the reluctance of the mentor and mentee to be in contact with one another; and others who evaluate a new hiree can contact the mentor. Guidelines regarding an "acceptable" record of scholarship involve the culture's parameters for publication, the publishing process for scholarly books and journal articles, and the relationship of professional associations to scholarly endeavors. Mentors must help the mentee balance teaching and research activities in ways that do not marginalize either activity. Strategies that may enhance and document effective teaching are preparing syllabi that acknowledge the academic climate; balancing student assignments with research deadlines; and enhancing and documenting teaching effectiveness and commitment. Mentors also need to protect junior faculty members from becoming over-extended in service initiatives without diminishing the import of these endeavors. If a productive and professionally committed faculty member becomes fully engaged in research, teaching, and service, the lines between these activities become blurred and the measure of success becomes internal. (Contains 10 references.) (RS)

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Deborah Borisoff

Strategies for Effective Mentoring and for being Effectively Mentored: A Focus on Ph.D.-Granting Private Research Institutions

ED 411 566

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INTRODUCTION

Recent studies indicate that, within the field of communication, there is enormous diversity of criteria for granting promotion and tenure (Chesebro, 1991;Emmert and Rollman, 1997; Hickson and Stacks, 1996). However, consistent among the findings is that at both public and private Ph.D.-granting institutions, the irreducible element for awarding promotion and tenure is a solid record of scholarly publications (albeit good teaching is expected and some service is valued).

Central administrators and communication administrators, in particular, acknowledge the need to help the new hiree negotiate the tenure maze. To help avoid having new hirees feel like they must "sink or swim" (Witt, 1991), many institutions have responded by assigning a mentor to the newly-hired faculty member. However, if my institution is typical, we ought to question the effectiveness of current mentoring systems.

In a 1994 survey of fourteen departments, a Commission on Teaching reported that despite some concrete efforts to mentor new faculty (for example, sharing course outlines, alerting faculty to appropriate professional associations and convention deadlines, providing 'protection' guidance on selecting committees, serving as a 'sounding board' and so on), the survey concluded that, "While there is not a substantial response to this portion of the questionnaire, there is a clear trend among

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those who did that they will give a faculty member concrete or abstract help *only when it is requested"* (emphasis added; Commission on Teaching, 1994, p. 2).

This Commission's study underscores the notion that when informal mentoring programs exist, the assistance provided by mentors may vary, there are no clear-cut guidelines of expectations for mentors, and the role of mentor is often viewed by both mentor and mentee as reactive rather than pro-active.

Department Chairs ought to question the usefulness and effectiveness of this type of mentoring and consider strategies that will be helpful when new faculty are ultimately reviewed for promotion and tenure. To this end I argue, first, that a formal mentoring process benefits the new hiree. Second, concrete guidance that a mentor can offer in the areas of scholarship, teaching, and service is provided. These strategies are directed to those employed at research institutions where scholarship is weighted most heavily. Similar works are needed by those who teach at institutions where different criteria may obtain.

GIVE THE MENTOR CLOUT

Here are some accounts of how mentoring is experienced across disciplines at a large, private research institution. From the new hirees: "My Department Chair has given me a reduced course load this year and advised me not to get involved on committees the first year or two."; "At our orientation with the Dean, it was suggested that I talk with Professor "X" for some guidance. We went out for lunch. He

told me to focus on my research. That was it. I don't want to bother him with too many questions because I know how busy he is."; "A mentor? I don't have one. I don't even know if the grades I am giving are consistent with the Department's policy"; "I was told my record of scholarly publications should withstand the scrutiny of committees outside of my department, but I can't get a handle on what this record should be. Some faculty I talk to tell me twelve articles; others tell me eight. One said a major book and three articles. I can't seem to find someone who can really help me."

Here are some reactions from those who have mentored: "I met with the professor, gave her some general guidelines, stressed the importance of publishing and invited her to come to me with any questions. Whenever I see her, I ask her how things are going. She always says, 'Fine.' I assume that means she's on the right track."; "I don't know how involved I should be. I don't want to be intrusive or overbearing."; "I figure the faculty member will come to me if he has any questions. It should be his responsibility to seek me out; not mine."; "I am reluctant to mentor because I feel I am merely re-producing myself and over-privileging what I have done to achieve tenure and my view of academic life. This goes counter to what mentoring ought to be: helping faculty find their place in the academic world."

These responses are typical. They reflect different construals of what a mentor ought to provide. They highlight

the distinct expectations of the mentee. While a new hiree hopefully would forge connections with several colleagues, a formal and clear-cut mentoring system may have several advantages.

First, if a Department Chair formally assigns a new hiree to a senior faculty member within the unit, the mentor would feel that he or she has the support, the responsibility, and the obligation to play a pro-active role in establishing an on-going relationship with the mentee. The mentor would no longer serve in a reactive capacity. Rather, the mentor would be involved directly with the academic life of the new hiree. (I note that while many new hirees indicate that they receive much of their guidance from the Department Chair or from other central administrators, they also express reluctance about being fully open with those individuals who wield direct power over their performance and future. Moreover, because many communication departments are comprised of diverse units including speech pathology, theatre, public relations, journalism, English, etc., mentors in these areas may be in a better position to provide concrete guidance that is specific to the discrete area.)

Second, an explicit mentoring process may reduce the reluctance of the mentor and mentee to be in contact with one another. New hirees would no longer view their need for guidance as being a "bother." Mentors would no longer view their suggestions as "intrusive" or "overbearing." Instead, they would

hopefully regard their relationship as collaborative; as part of the normal process of the institution.

And third, if others who evaluate a new hiree (particularly review committee members and administrators who may be outside the discipline) have a concern or question regarding a faculty member's prospects for tenure or promotion, they would be able to contact the one individual who perhaps knows the faculty member best: the mentor. An involved and active mentor may be in the best position to offer concrete suggestions to the mentee that would address the concerns of those who are distanced from the on-going activities of the new hiree.

By establishing a formal mentoring procedure, academic institutions would move beyond viewing mentoring as *desirable*, to accepting it as an *expected* and *accepted* part of academic life. Department Chairs can play a critical role in guiding both the mentor and the mentee in their relationship. The mentoring strategies described in the following sections are offered in the spirit of helping a new hiree make productive use of his or her time when the "tenure clock" starts to tick. They are offered, moreover, in the spirit of nurtuing the spark that initially attracted the individual to academic; not to extinguishing it.

MULTIPLE PATHS TO A RECORD OF SCHOLARSHIP

Much has been written indicating that at Ph.D.-granting research institutions, both the quality and quantity of scholarship--especially publications--figure mightily in the

granting or denying of promotion and tenture (Borisoff, 1996; Chesebro, 1991; Emmert and Rollman, 1997; Hahn, 1990; Hickson and Stacks, 1996). In light of the fact that no single set of norms or standards exists within the discipline, the following strategies are offered as a general guideline. Some of these strategies are obvious; others, perhaps less so. The intention, however, is to suggest some considerations to the mentor; to suggest to the mentee areas in which he or she might seek guidance. The three paths explored in this section include orientation to the culture, the process of publishing, and the connection of professional associations to scholarly endeavors.

The culture's parameters for publication

When a newly-minted Ph.D. is hired, both the Department Chair and members of the central administration routinely offer general guidelines regarding an "acceptable" record of scholarship. Often a range of activities is decribed. This is understandable because the availability of external funding, the existence of extant journals, and the accessibility of book publishers varies across disciplines; often within the same field.

Although general guidance is helpful, the mentor ought to provide information that is specific and concrete. One way to do this is by examining the records of those who achieved, as well as those who were denied promotion and tenure, within recent years. Such scrutiny would enable the mentor to ascertain a base-line of the number of publications and types of publication outlets acceptable at a particular institution.

An examination of actual materials may be available at certain institutions (for example, statistics published at public institutions). When records are not available, a mentor could hopefully gather this information informally through his or her own contacts in others units. To facilitate a schedule for bringing research to publication, it is important to know whether eight, or ten, or twelve articles is the norm; it is important to know the balance between co-authored and single-authored works; it is important to know what kinds of books are valued. The more specific the information, the more apt we will be to alter the following metaphors new hirees use to describe their initial experiences: "spinning my wheels"; "living in a pressure cooker"; "floundering" (Witt, 1991).

The publishing process

The new hiree has typically spent the past several years devoted to one topic: the dissertation. The natural tendency therefore, is to generate a couple of journal articles from the document and/or to negotiate a book contract.

Insofar as journal submissions are concerned, an involved mentor can do more than suggest appopriate journals. She or he can:

1. Establish a general time-frame for witing and submitting articles. The publication norms for a particular institutions will inform how many articles a new hiree ought to be completing within a single year. The mentor, moreover, must be sensitive to "front-loading" a record. Most research institutions value an

on-going track record of scholarship. The mentor can help the mentee avoid a situation where three articles appear in year three and nothing is published in years four and five.

2. Read the actual article(s) and provide initial feedback prior to submission.

3. Provide advice on the actual timing of submissions. Generally, during the two months following regional, national and international conventions, journal editors receive an enormous number of submissions. The faculty member might be advised to time submissions in such a way so as to avoid these heavy periods.

4. Encourage the new hiree to collect material for future research even while working on other articles. Once a manuscript has been submitted, there may be a tendency to wait for reviews before undertaking another project. New faculty should be encouraged to begin work on another project immediately. If they have been collecting materials for other projects over time, they will have resources readily available. This is especially important as the turn-around time for receiving reviews is often six to eight weeks.

5. Provide strategies for responding to reviews. In instances when "revise and resubmit" is recommended, the mentor can do more than discuss the reviews with the mentee. He or she can offer concrete suggestions about responding to reviewers' concerns. For example, the author can be encouraged to write a comprehensive cover sheet specifying where and how each reviewer's

concerns have been addressed and request that this be sent to reviewers along with the manuscript. Additionally, the author may highlight within the manuscript itself those changes that address the reviewers' comments. Such attention to detail indicates to reviewers that their concerns have been acknowledged; it facilitates re-reading a revised manuscript which reviewers appreciate.

Insofar as turning a dissertation into a book or securing a contract for a book in a related area are concerned, the mentor ought to alert the mentee to three realities, in particular, about book publishing that can affect a junior faculty member's prospects for tenure and promotion.

The prospect of having one's dissertation, or a separate manuscript, published by a reputable house is especially attractive and would likely be regarded positively when tenure and promotion decisions are made. The mentor, first, must encourage the mentee to examine carefully the publication rate of companies that invite submissions or offer contracts. Many editors welcome a book prospectus and sample chapters. The junior faculty member needs to ascertain how much time would be involved with such an undertaking and balance this against the likelihood for receiving an initial contract.

Second, the mentor should explore with the mentee several practical issues related to bringing a book-length manuscript to publication. Because a junior faculty member is not in a position to compete with a colleague who has an established track

record of publication, he or she must be prepared to submit the entire book on spec to a publisher. While turning a dissertation into a book might initially seem a manageable endeavor, the reality of the revision process might easily take a year, or more, to accomplish. Submitting a final manuscript along with a prospectus does not guarantee publication. Publishers routinely send their manuscripts out for review by experts in the field. This review process can take anywhere from two to four months. The author needs to consider, and be prepared, to devote a considerable amount of time to revising an entire manuscript with the realization that this revision may again undergo a lengthy review process.

Finally, assuming that a manuscript is eventually accepted and scheduled for publication, the junior faculty needs to anticipate that a target date for publication and the actual date that a book is published may not coincide. Publishing companies, like most organizations, are subject of financial considerations, internal re-structuring, external changes, and re-prioritization. It would not be unheard of, therefore, for an initial invitation offered in 1997, to not see the scholarly light of day until 2001 or 2002, if indeed it gets published at all. The intellectual, emotional, and pyschic toll such an endeavor might take on a faculty member who is under a time limit needs to be discussed candidly.

The relationship of professional associations to scholarly endeavors

The reason most often cited for not attending conventions--especially the regional and national conferences--is that the institution has cut back on, or cannot provide, funding. Conventions are often viewed as a frill. The mentor can help the new hiree change this perspective. If faculty at research institutions are paid to engage in research, membership in professional associations and attending annual conventions should be viewed as essential components of the research process. But beyond changing one's perspective, there are four practical ways in which attending conventions connect with scholarship. The mentor can encourage the mentee to:

1. Attend the business meetings of the interest groups to which the faculty member belongs. Often the major scholars in discrete areas attend these meetings, providing the opportunity for junior faculty to get to know those individuals who may eventually be called upon to serve as external reviewers at promotion and tenure time. Moreover, it is at these business meetings where decisions are made on topics for the next year's convention. Such information can be useful in formulating competitive papers for the upcoming year.
2. Attend programs that can provide direct guidance on research and publishing. Sometimes regional conferences and nearly all of the national conventions include programs where faculty have an opportunity to meet informally with journal editors, book publishers, and with those who are experienced in grant writing.

Information obtained and relationships established at such programs are invaluable.

3. Establish connections with presenters who share similar or related research interests. Many collaborative projects may result from relationships formed initially at conferences.

4. Talk to individuals about the functions and roles of the various committtees; about how one can become involved.

Professional associations rely on the commitment and involvement of members for their very survival. The junior faculty today, who are willing to become involved over time in the associations' affairs, will emerge as the future leaders.

DEVELOPING AN ATTITUDE TOWARD, AND RECORD OF, EFFECTIVE TEACHING

A look at recent issues of *Spectra* reveals that research institutions seek candidate who are able to teach two, sometimes three, and sometimes four different courses. Additional duties, such as curriculum or program development, supervision of doctoral candidates, advisement, and service are included as well. Each of these position announcements lists teaching as the first area of responsibility. Embedded in these announcements, however, are the phrases "promise of scholarship and research," "potential for research," "demonstrated record of a research agenda," and "established program of research."

Although teaching is the activity in which most new hirees are expected to devote the majority of their time, and, for which their expertise to teach certain areas serves as justification for the position, their records are scrutinized most closely on

the basis of what they have not yet (or, what they have just begun) to establish: their scholarship.

Emmert and Rollman's (1997) study indicates expectations for teaching and scholarship in communication departments. Their findings suggest that at Ph.D.-granting institutions, "the number of scholarly contributions to the discipline would be 3.18 per year, or about 19 for promotion to the rank of associate professor...." (pp. 15-16). (This average includes papers presented at professional conferences.) The Hickson and Stacks (1996) survey found a mean of 4.85 as the minimum number of publications for tenure decisions. Moreover, despite the emphasis on scholarship in determining tenure and promotion, Emmert and Rollman (1997) conclude that "departments in the Communication Arts and Sciences (or possibly the colleges and universities in which they exist) do not adjust their expectations for scholarly productivity and service relative to teaching loads as much as they should" (p. 16). That is, at Ph.D.-granting institutions, assistant professors on average are assigned 43% of their time to teaching; they are expected to devote 45% of their time to scholarship; the remaining 12% falls into the service category.

The irony becomes obvious: junior faculty are expected to devote nearly an equal amount of time to teaching and to scholarship. Yet, according to Chesebro (1991), when tenure and promotion decisions are made, these activities are not regarded equally: 84% of department chairs consider quality of research

to be very important; only 16% view teaching in this way.

Although newly-hired faculty are often assigned a reduced teaching load during their initial year, the mentor has dual challenges. That is, he/she must help the mentee balance teaching and research activities in ways that do not marginalize either activity; the mentor can help the junior faculty with strategies to enhance and to document effective teaching. The following strategies may facilitate this process.

Preparing syllabi that acknowledge the academic climate

When final candidates are invited to interview with departments, sample syllabi are often requested by the search committee. Such syllabi may impress the committee. Often, however, once a candidate is hired, he/she finds early on during the semester that adjustments are required to meet the students' needs and level, thereby taking time away from research activities. Since junior faculty without much prior teaching experience may not think to ask, the Department Chair, in this instance, should make sure that the new hiree is provided with sufficient examples of syllabi used at his/her institution. If the new hiree will be teaching one of the foundation courses, he/she needs to ascertain what will be covered in subsequent courses. If teaching a specialized and/or more advanced course, the new hiree needs to ascertain the depth and range of assignments and evaluations that are expected at a particular institution. The point is this: newly hired faculty should spend the several months prior to joining an institution

preparing their syllabi. Armed with the information ahead of time, they can avoid having to devote considerable time to re-adjusting their courses once the term begins.

Balancing student assignments with one's research deadlines.

Although newly-hired faculty have typically prepared their syllabi prior to joining an institution, the mentor can help the new hiree create a balance between teaching and research so that neither activity becomes so unwieldly that it would compromise effectiveness in either area. In the previous section on scholarship, it was suggested that the mentor help the mentee negotiate a general schedule for research and writing. Using this schedule as a framework, the junior faculty member can adjust teaching assignments that will not interfere with meeting writing deadlines. For example, if term papers are required for a particular course offered during the fall semester, the professor might establish that these papers are due two weeks prior to the end of the term rather than at the final class meeting. By reading the papers prior to the semester break, the professor can presumably devote his/her time to research/writing during this period rather than to grading papers. Relatedly, the professor might consider assigning several short papers throughout the term in lieu of one long paper or project. If the mentor and mentee consider teaching and research obligations and deadlines simultaneously, they are apt to avoid the situation where the junior faculty member becomes so "overwhelmed" that both activities suffer.

Enhancing and documentig teaching effectiveness and commitment.

Current evaluation systems at many institutions tend to view teaching as a product; as a performance. A junior faculty member is visited perhaps a few times by a colleague or department chair. The written evaluations of these visitations become part of the "evidence" for teaching. End-of-semester course evaluations provide another piece of this "evidence." Such documentation encourages new faculty to emphasize the performance aspects of teaching, thereby undermining the process dimension of education. The mentor can help junior faculty begin to think about teaching not as an accumulation of "documents" that attests to one's performance within the classroom, but as a process that requires on-going scrutiny and reflection that spans one's entire career.

This process can be demonstrated in multiple ways. Faculty ought to be encouraged to elicit student feedback at several points throughout the semester so that adjustments, if warranted, can be made during the term itself to maximize the educational experience. Faculty ca be encouraged to video-tape a number of sessions and review these tapes with the mentor or with an external consultant from another unit would not be involved in the faculty member's evaluation. Attending sessions at one's institution or at professional conferences that address aspects of teaching can be powerful sources of information, inspiration, and reflection. An awareness of how style and multiple approaches to teaching may influence one's effective-

ness (issues of abiding attention in extant communication journals) can be part of an on-going dialogue with the mentor. Recognizing that research and teaching need not be viewed as mutually exclusive but may be regarded, instead, as joint endeavors that correlate positively with student evaluations (Allen, 1996) can reinforce the process and interrelatedness of these activities.

So long as junior faculty are required to provide evidence of teaching effectiveness as part of their assessment toward the attainment of tenure and promotion, the aforementioned activities can be utilized as documentation. Hopefully, though, by joining conversations about, and engaging in self-reflection on, one's teaching, junior faculty will maintain the art of awakening young minds, rather than achieving scores on course evaluations, as *The End of Education* (Postman, 1995).

SERVICE: LAST AND LEAST

The survival of professional associations, as indicated earlier, depends upon the active involvement of its members. The day-to-day operations, the goals, and the decisions that affect the quality of life at most academic institutions similarly rely on the commitment and participation of the professoriate. These are compelling reasons to engage actively in service. There are equally compelling reasons not to. Emmert and Rollman (1997) report that a scant 12% of an assistant professor's annual time at doctoral-degree granting institutions is expected in the service category. Hickson and Stacks (1996) report 214 responses

indicating insufficient or inadequate research (141 responses) and/or teaching (73 responses) as reasons for denying tenure in recent years. Only 34 respondents cited inadequate service as a factor. (It should be noted that type of institution was not indicated in these responses. Nor could it be determined if lack of service was a reason for denying tenure in conjunction with other activities.)

Junior faculty who are repeatedly told that "you don't get much credit for service" are apt to incorporate this perspective into their own behavior. Why, indeed, should they "bother" to devote their time to activities which receive scant recognition and reward? Yet despite how service may be viewed, junior faculty often are invited to serve on numerous committees. Moreover, they are reluctant to decline such invitations when they are extended by administrators or by senior faculty. The mentor can play a critical role by re-shaping the perspective that marginalizes service, and by protecting the junior faculty member from becoming over-extended with committee service.

From a practical standpoint, committee service within one's institution and professional associations enhances the exposure and visibility of junior faculty. Their commitment, their ideas, and their voices become known to those in a position to evaluate their contributions. From a practical standpoint, the internal and external links forged by service endeavors reflect positively upon one's institution and upon the discipline itself. Chesebro reminds us that service does not only mean "'putting in time' on

a department or college committee.... Rather, service can mean transforming what we know as a discipline into functional tools that can affect and resolve societal problems" (1996, p. 2). From a practical standpoint, the impetus to become an involved member of the disicipline, of one's institution, and of the community can easily result in service on six or more worth-while projects annually.

The mentor can protect the junior faculty member from becoming over-extended in service initiatives without diminishing the import of these endeavors in the following ways:

1. Prior to volunteering for, or agreeing to join, committees, the mentor and mentee need to consider how much time over the course of each month (for example, attending meetings, preparing materials, reports, documents, etc. related to committee work) is expected for each committee. A consideration of this information in relation to time required for teaching, teaching-related activities, and for one's research agenda, will facilitate realistic and manageable decisions.
2. The mentor can serve as gatekeeper to help the faculty member maintain a balance of the three activities for which he/she is evaluated each year. Junior faculty are often reluctant to decline service on a committee lest they be perceived as "uncooperative." In a formal mentoring system, committee chairs would either have to clear such invitations with the mentor first, or, the mentor would be expected to intervene on behalf

of the junior faculty member to explain why service at a particular point in time may have to be postponed.

Despite, and perhaps because of, the contradiction between the importance of service and its current valuation in promotion and tenure decisions at research institutions, the challenge for the mentor is hopefully to instill a positive attitude toward service that is abiding and sustained throughout one's professional career albeit these contributions may be limited initially.

CONCLUSION

From the time a new faculty member is hired until a final decision is made on promotion and tenure, his/her record will undergo constant scrutiny (by departmental personnel committees, by School- and/or University-wide committees, by external reviewers in the discipline, by administrators). In light of these formal mechanisms to assess one's contributions and achievements, it seems reasonable to encourage a formal mentoring system to help the new hiree develop a record that will withstand such assessment. Moreover, in light of the array of presumably impartial reviews to which one's record is subjected, it seems only fair and humane to assign a mentor--who is both powerful and empowered--to serve as advocate, liaison, and guide throughout this process.

Three final issues ought to be mentioned at this point. First, while this paper proposed several concrete suggestions for

mentoring junior faculty hired by private, Ph.D.-granting research institutions, these suggestions do not exhaust all of the ways we can help new hirees adjust and succeed. Nor does the recommendation for the assignment of a formal mentor preclude the many informal mentoring opportunities that other individuals may provide.

Second, depsite the on-going debates within our discipline regarding the merits of creating research paper trails, of valuing quality of research over quantity and, of developing mechanisms to regard teaching as scholarship, the tenure-track faculty member is currently faced with a very real time frame that excludes him or her from participating in this exchange. The current system of what we value and of how much ought be valued may be flawed and imprecise. Yet so long as this system is utilized to determine the retention or termination of young academics, the mentor has an obligation to help the mentee excel and to comply with the extant reward system.

Finally, how the mentor views his or her own professional contributions can have the most significant impact on how the mentee, in turn, formulates his/her own definition of an academic. Prior to tenure, it is hard to ignore weighing how each activity will be regarded and valued by others. The measure of success during one's probationary period is imposed externally. If the message to the junior faculty is that "you only have to work this hard until tenure. After that, you can relax.", this will become their truth. But there is another

truth and that is this: If a productive and professionally committed faculty member becomes fully engaged in research, teaching, and service, the lines between these activities become blurred, the percentage of time devoted to these endeavors becomes irrelevant, and most importantly, the measure of one's success becomes internal.

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